



**Mount
Vernon**
IOWA

Chris Nosbisch, City Administrator
Douglas Shannon, Chief of Police

Jamie A. Hampton, Mayor

Council:

Eric Roudabush
Scott Rose
Tom Wieseler
Stephanie West
Deb Herrmann

Press Release

March 25, 2020

Updated Covid-19 Impacts Across our City

On March 17, 2020, Governor Kim Reynolds issued a State of Public Health Disaster Emergency. This issuance activates the public health response on a state level and allows for greater flexibility for public safety officials. To date, the Governor has issued directives that include the requirement for social distancing, and the subsequent closure of restaurants/bars (carry out/delivery still allowed), fitness centers, theaters, casinos, salons, medical spas, barbershops, tattoo establishments, tanning facilities, massage therapy establishments, swimming pools, and any places of mass gathering until March 31st. The state is also working to address the impact of these closures and other impacts through the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) and Iowa Workforce Development office (IWD). Locally, information from both organizations is being released by the City through CDG Director Joe Jennison.

The City of Mt. Vernon has seen changes to its operation due to the Covid-19 virus as well. A number of initial changes were outlined within the March 16, 2020 press release. Those items have been included in this press release as well. Public facilities continue to be closed to public access and will do so for the foreseeable future. If you need assistance from a particular department, you can contact City Hall or visit our website at www.cityofmtvernon-ia.gov. The Mt. Vernon City Council recognizes both the mental and financial strain Covid-19 is creating, and is consistently working on local solutions to relieve these burdens.

TO THAT END, TWO ITEMS OF SIGNIFICANT IMPORTANCE TO THE PUBLIC:

1. The City Council will be suspending the garbage tag program through the week of April 20, 2020. You will be allowed to set out three tags worth of garbage each week, meaning three cans or three bags. Large item pick up has been suspended until the Covid-19 pandemic has passed.
2. The City of Mt. Vernon will credit your utility account for any credit card fee you receive while paying your bill over the phone. If you would prefer not to pay your utility bill over the phone, you may still drop your payment in the drop box at City Hall.



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Additional Information for the Public:

City Hall

- As with all public buildings, City Hall is closed to public access. Staff is available by phone or email. Please contact City Hall at 319-895-8742 for assistance.
- City Council meetings, starting with the April 6th meeting, will be held remotely until further notice. City Boards and Commissions that must meet during the crisis will also do so remotely, starting in the month of April. The City plans to allow public participation through the ZOOM meeting application and will post the entry information at the beginning of each agenda. Agendas will continue to be available on our website. www.cityofmtvernon-ia.gov
- City Hall is encouraging residents to pay their bill via credit card over the phone or use the drop box outside of City Hall. As stated previously, your account will be credited for any credit card transaction fee you incur during this crisis. The City is encouraging residents to make payments through this crisis, however, we have suspended late payments and shut-offs at this time. If you have questions or need assistance, please contact City Hall.
- The City Administrator will be working from a remote office at the new Police Station to limit staff exposure. You may contact Chris Nosbisch at cnosbisch@cityofmtvernon-ia.gov or by leaving a message at City Hall.

Police Department

- The Police Department remains active in the community, but they are limiting their exposure as they can.
- As stated previously, there is no public access allowed to the Police Department building.
- The Police Department has suspended the finger printing program while the building remains closed.
- Please be mindful of scammers. Unfortunately, the number of attempted scams increases immensely during an active crisis. If you have questions or feel you are being scammed, please contact the Police Department at 319-895-6141.

Fire Department

- The Fire Station is closed to all non-essential visitors.

Water/Wastewater Department

- Staff will not be completing meter change outs and will suspend any non-emergency water main projects that may have been scheduled.



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- This has been all over social media, but we will reiterate this once again. PLEASE DO NOT FLUSH FLUSHABLE WIPES, PAPER TOWELS, OR SIMILAR ITEMS DOWN THE SEWER SYSTEM. This will affect your neighbors as well as the entire City sewer system.
 - Staff may move to estimated water meter reads. Should this occur, your bill may need to be adjusted at a future date. This would occur once we are able to physically read the meter.

Street Department

- Staff will continue with brush pick-up as scheduled, but spring clean-up has been suspended. If a make-up date can be scheduled with our hauler, you will be notified of the change.
- Staff will begin working on beautification efforts in the parks as long as our citizens continue to practice social distancing behaviors. Please allow our staff the ability to complete necessary work by maintaining a six foot buffer when possible.

Parks and Recreation Department

- Outdoor parks will remain open to the public as long as sound social distancing behaviors are maintained. Public Restrooms in the park will remain closed for the time being.
- Alternative methods for swimming lesson signups are being considered and will be released to the public as soon as possible.

Closure and Event Cancellation

- The LBC will remain closed until April 13, 2020. This date may be extended prior to the 13th if recommended by the Governor's office or Linn County Public Health. Monthly payments for membership have been suspended until we re-open and memberships will be extended for the time we remain closed.
- As stated previously, there is no public access allowed to any of the public buildings.
- Canceled the MV Park and Rec Spring Soccer Activities that were scheduled to begin 3/23/2020.
- Canceled the Easter egg dash scheduled for April 11th, 2020.
- Canceled the Mount Vernon Fire Department Breakfast scheduled for April 11th, 2020.
- A press release regarding the Chalk the Walk event will be released by the 25th. Unfortunately, there will be significant changes to this year's event.



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For further updates, I would encourage citizens to call 2-1-1 or visit the 2-1-1 website. You may also visit the Linn County Public Health or the Iowa Department of Public Health websites for more Covid-19 related information.

Please stay tuned for added updates via the City Facebook Page, Mount Vernon Police Facebook Page, Twitter and the City website. Staff would also encourage you to sign up for our Nixle mobile alerts. The sign up is located on the right hand side of the City's homepage. Information surrounding Covid-19 continues to evolve daily. We continue to encourage residents to practice social distancing measures and take precautionary measures to protect you and your family:

Protect Yourself:

- Wash hands
- Hand sanitizer
- Avoid touching face
- Avoid close contact with others that are sick
- Social distancing: Put distance between yourself and others. No less than 6 feet.

Protect Others:

- Stay home when sick
- Cover coughs and sneezes – elbow or tissue
 - Wash hands after or use hand sanitizer

Additional Resources:

City of Mount Vernon: <https://www.cityofmtvernon-ia.gov/>

Mount Vernon-Lisbon Community Development Group: <http://www.visitmvl.com>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/>

Iowa Department of Public Health: <https://idph.iowa.gov/Emerging-Health-Issues/Novel-Coronavirus>

Linn County Public Health: <https://www.linncounty.org/1372/COVID-19>
www.211iowa.org or the mobile app www.211iowa.org/211app/

Sincerely,

Mt. Vernon City Council and Staff